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ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as an important mechanism for developing entrepreneurial competencies, attitudes, and intentions among young people. Colleges and universities play a significant role in preparing students not only for employment but also for self-employment and entrepreneurial careers. This study examines the role of entrepreneurship education in developing entrepreneurial intention among college students. The study focuses on how entrepreneurship-related knowledge, practical training, entrepreneurial skills, exposure to successful entrepreneurs, and institutional support influence students' willingness to start a business. A descriptive and analytical research design can be adopted for the study. Primary data may be collected from college students through a structured questionnaire. Statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, t-test, ANOVA, and factor analysis may be used depending on the objectives and data characteristics. The study is expected to provide insights for educational institutions and policymakers regarding the design of effective entrepreneurship education programmes. Strengthening practical entrepreneurial learning, mentoring, incubation facilities, and industry interaction may contribute to developing stronger entrepreneurial intentions among students.

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, College Students, Entrepreneurial Skills, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Entrepreneurship Development.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as an important contributor to economic development, employment generation, innovation, and social transformation. In a rapidly changing business environment, young people are increasingly encouraged to consider entrepreneurship as an alternative career option rather than depending entirely on traditional employment. College students represent an important potential source of future entrepreneurs. However, possessing an interest in business does not necessarily mean that students will establish an enterprise. Their entrepreneurial intention can be influenced by several factors, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, perceived opportunities, self-confidence, family background, social environment, access to finance, and institutional support. Entrepreneurship education can play a significant role in transforming students' interest in entrepreneurship into stronger entrepreneurial intentions. It can provide students with knowledge about opportunity identification, business planning, financial management, marketing, innovation, risk management, and enterprise creation. Modern entrepreneurship education has moved beyond classroom-based theoretical instruction. Experiential learning, business simulations, entrepreneurial projects, internships, mentoring, startup competitions, incubation centres, and interaction with entrepreneurs can provide students

with practical exposure to the entrepreneurial process. Therefore, studying the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention among college students is important for understanding whether educational institutions are effectively preparing students for entrepreneurial careers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hassan et al. (2020) investigated entrepreneurial intention among Indian university students, focusing on opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Based on data from 334 students, the study found that both opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial self-efficacy positively influenced entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurship education positively moderated the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. The study therefore highlights the importance of designing education programmes that strengthen students' confidence and ability to identify business opportunities.

Martínez-Gregorio, Badenes-Ribera and Oliver (2021) conducted a meta-analysis focusing on the effects of entrepreneurship education in educational settings. The study found small positive effects of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Importantly, the duration of entrepreneurship programmes was associated with stronger effects on entrepreneurial intention, indicating that sustained educational interventions may be more effective than short-term programmes.

Zhang et al. (2022) examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention among college students through a meta-analysis. Their study analysed 36 records involving **29,736 students** and found that entrepreneurship education was positively associated with entrepreneurial intention. They also identified national context as a significant moderator, indicating that the influence of entrepreneurship education may differ across countries and educational environments.

Ellikkal and Rajamohan (2023) examined factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among university students in India. Their study considered entrepreneurship education along with family background, socio-cultural environment and institutional support. The research highlights that entrepreneurial intention should not be viewed as the outcome of education alone; students' family and socio-cultural environments and support from higher education institutions can also influence their entrepreneurial aspirations.

Akhtar et al. (2022) examined student entrepreneurial orientation and its relationship with entrepreneurial intention in an Indian university context. The study considered innovativeness, need for achievement, opportunity recognition, risk-taking propensity and entrepreneurship education. The findings indicated positive relationships between entrepreneurial dimensions and students' entrepreneurial intention and suggested that effective entrepreneurship education can assist students in transforming entrepreneurial intention into entrepreneurial action.

A recent 2025 systematic literature review examined entrepreneurship education within the Theory of Planned Behaviour framework. The review identified entrepreneurship education as an important factor influencing entrepreneurial intention and highlighted the roles of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. It also pointed to the need for broader models incorporating additional variables beyond the traditional TPB framework. A 2026 study among college students further examined entrepreneurial education together with entrepreneurial attitude, self-efficacy, subjective norms and innovation orientation. This recent research reinforces the importance of examining entrepreneurship education alongside psychological and behavioural factors rather than treating education as an isolated determinant of entrepreneurial intention.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although entrepreneurship education is increasingly included in higher education curricula, many students continue to prefer conventional salaried employment after graduation. Merely offering entrepreneurship-related subjects may not be sufficient to develop entrepreneurial intention. There may be a gap between entrepreneurship education received by students and their willingness to actually pursue entrepreneurship.

The major issues include:

- Limited practical exposure to entrepreneurship.
- Lack of awareness about business opportunities.
- Insufficient entrepreneurial skills.
- Fear of business failure.
- Lack of confidence in starting a business.
- Limited interaction with successful entrepreneurs.
- Inadequate mentoring and incubation facilities.
- Limited awareness about government entrepreneurship schemes.
- Difficulty in accessing finance.
- Preference for secure salaried employment.

Hence, the present study attempts to examine whether entrepreneurship education contributes to the development of entrepreneurial intention among college students and to identify the dimensions of entrepreneurship education that have the greatest influence.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of entrepreneurship education among college students.
- To examine the level of entrepreneurial intention among college students.
- To analyze the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.
- To identify the factors of entrepreneurship education influencing entrepreneurial intention.
- To examine the differences in entrepreneurial intention based on selected demographic factors.

HYPOTHESES

For a publishable empirical paper, the following hypotheses can be considered.

Main Hypothesis

H₀: Entrepreneurship education has no significant influence on entrepreneurial intention among college students.

H₁: Entrepreneurship education has a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention among college students.

Dimension-wise hypotheses

H₀₁: Entrepreneurial knowledge has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

H₀₂: Entrepreneurial skills have no significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

H₀₃: Practical entrepreneurial training has no significant influence on entrepreneurial intention.

H₀₄: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

H₀₅: Entrepreneurial attitude has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

FINDINGS

Entrepreneurship education has a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention.

Students who receive entrepreneurship education are generally more likely to develop an intention to start a business. A meta-analysis covering 36 studies and 29,736 students found a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy plays an important role.

Education can increase students' confidence in their ability to identify opportunities, develop business ideas and manage entrepreneurial activities. Indian research found that self-efficacy significantly influences entrepreneurial intention.

Opportunity recognition strengthens entrepreneurial intention.

Students who can identify market needs and business opportunities are more likely to develop entrepreneurial intentions.

Practical entrepreneurship education is important.

Classroom teaching alone may not be sufficient. Activities such as business-plan preparation, entrepreneurship projects, internships, industrial visits and interaction with entrepreneurs can help students convert theoretical knowledge into entrepreneurial interest.

Entrepreneurial attitude influences the education–intention relationship.

Research among Indian university students indicates that entrepreneurial education and opportunity recognition can influence intention through self-efficacy, while entrepreneurial attitude can strengthen these relationships.

SUGESSTIONS**Introduce practical entrepreneurship education**

Colleges should combine theoretical concepts with practical activities such as business-plan development, project work, case studies and entrepreneurial simulations.

Develop entrepreneurial self-efficacy

Entrepreneurship programmes should provide students with opportunities to make decisions, solve business problems and manage small projects to improve their confidence.

Strengthen opportunity-recognition skills

Students should be trained to identify customer needs, market gaps, emerging technologies and potential business opportunities.

Organize interaction with successful entrepreneurs

Guest lectures, entrepreneur–student interaction, mentoring and alumni entrepreneurship programmes can provide students with practical knowledge and motivation.

Promote incubation and start-up activities

Colleges should establish or strengthen incubation centers that provide mentoring, networking, business-plan support and guidance for students with innovative ideas.

RESEARCH GAP

A strong research gap can be framed as follows:

Although considerable research has examined entrepreneurial intention among university and college students, there remains a need to understand how different dimensions of entrepreneurship education contribute to entrepreneurial intention. Existing studies often focus on the presence or absence of entrepreneurship education rather than examining the relative contribution of entrepreneurial knowledge, practical training, skills development, mentoring, and institutional support. Further, the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial attitude in translating educational exposure into entrepreneurial intention deserves greater empirical attention. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the multidimensional role of

CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship education has the potential to play an important role in developing entrepreneurial intention among college students. Effective entrepreneurship education should extend beyond classroom-based theoretical instruction and provide students with opportunities to acquire practical knowledge, entrepreneurial skills, confidence, and exposure to real-world business situations. Mentoring, interaction with entrepreneurs, business-plan development, incubation support, startup competitions, and experiential learning can strengthen the entrepreneurial learning environment. The development of entrepreneurial intention should therefore be viewed as a process influenced by education, personal capabilities, social support, and institutional environment. Higher educational institutions can contribute significantly to this process by creating an ecosystem that encourages students to identify opportunities, develop innovative ideas, assess risks, and consider entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

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